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CHURCH HISTORY

PARKER, IRENE. *Dissenting Academies in England: Their Rise, Progress and Place among the Educational Systems of the Country*. Cambridge: University Press, 1914. xii+168 pages. 4s.

The author prefaces the discussion with a brief recapitulation of the history of education in England. Even at the beginning of the seventeenth century this was thoroughly ecclesiastical. Trivium and Quadrivium were still in the saddle. The Renaissance spirit had degenerated into a narrow and lifeless classicism. Education was controlled by a dominant church in a reactionary state and in turn played into the hands of both. Especially was this true after the Restoration, when state and church joined hands to crush democracy, whether in politics, religion, or education.

In such an emergency as this the dissenting academies were born. The broad vision and fine devotion of such men as Hartlib, Comenius, Milton, and their followers prepared the ground. Founded at first by dissenting ministers deprived of their livings by the Act of Conformity, they sprang up all over England. They grew in spite of persecution. They came to be the greatest schools of their day. In contrast to the prevailing educational sterility they were fecund. They came to rival the universities. While these still clung to a narrowing classical curriculum, the academies responded to human need with the study of modern language and literature, history, science, and philosophy. They humanized the method of teaching, as well as its content. Education came to be permeated with the practical purpose to fit men for all the great vocations of life, not merely the learned professions.

Beginning as little groups of students gathered around a Morton, a Frankland, or a Doddridge, they developed into a well-organized educational institution. As our author says, "The academies were the first educational institutions in England to put into practice . . . theories which had found expression in Rabelais, Montaigne, . . . Bacon, . . . Comenius, Milton and Petty." That they contributed mightily to the educational awakening of the nineteenth century in England cannot be questioned.

H. H. W.

MASON, A. J. *The Church of England and Episcopacy*. Cambridge: University Press, 1914. ix+560 pages. \$2.50.

The thesis of this suggestive volume is that the doctrine of the apostolic succession has been the consistent teaching of the Anglican church from the Reformation to the nineteenth century. The book grew out of certain discussions within Anglicanism itself which bore on this question. As chaplain of the Archbishop of Canterbury the author has prepared an exhaustive catena of passages culled from the works of Anglican theologians and clerics from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century relating to the question of episcopacy and the attitude of the Anglican church to non-episcopal bodies at home and abroad. He believes unequivocally in "the apostolic and divine institution of episcopacy," and that "to tamper" with it "would be to throw away all that is most distinctive in the character and prospects of the Church of England." Literally a cloud of witnesses, subpoenaed from Anglicanism of the past four hundred years, offer their individual testimony or argument to support these propositions. That the arguments vary in cogency, breadth, sound scholarship, and loyalty to demonstrable facts would naturally be expected. One must be gifted with an

inspired imagination to appreciate the full force of certain lines of thinking. The non-episcopal reader instinctively punctuates the page here and there with exclamation and interrogation points. To appeal to the seven letters of Revelation as a proof for Christ's institution of the episcopate may be termed Mephiboshethan. There are others equally lame in both their feet. The author does not father all the arguments advanced, it should be stated.

No one can read the book candidly without gaining a deeper appreciation of the reasons why the adherents of episcopacy champion their faith. Its antiquity, its strength of tradition, the suggestions—not to say the implications—of the New Testament, the unifying power exerted by it through history, all these make their appeal. On the other hand, one cannot read the book without the conviction that the claims of Anglicanism are based on undemonstrated and undemonstrable assumptions. That episcopacy as it developed in the second and third centuries was in the mind of Christ; that he passed it on to his apostles; that these in turn established it as the only inspired form of ecclesiastical organization; that not a series of unusual historical circumstances merely, but the direct operation of the Holy Ghost led to the monarchical episcopate—these are assumptions which still await adequate proof. In many of the arguments used there is too great an appeal to Old Testament hierarchical considerations. There is too much deductive reasoning based on the later history of the church. There is too little appreciation of Christianity as a religion of the spirit, and of the spiritual freedom which it involved, but which the church made haste to lose in the materializing and institutionalizing tendencies of the age.

It is no criticism of the book to add that if it voices modern Anglicanism the reunion of Protestant Christendom will never be effected until Protestantism everywhere accedes to the divine right of episcopacy and of apostolic succession.

H. H. W.

SELBIE, W. B. (ed.). *Evangelical Christianity: Its History and Witness*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. x+256 pages. \$1.00.

The aim of these lectures is to show the spiritual unity of the evangelical idea "as unfolded in modern times in the history and . . . influence . . . of communions differing in organization but agreeing in their essential view of the Gospel and Church of Christ." Those communions are included whose "emphasis falls upon the experimental and personal rather than the sacramental and institutional aspects of Christianity."

A preliminary lecture deals with the presence and development of the Protestant idea of church and ministry in primitive Christianity. The church began as a community of believers, led by an unofficial ministry whose power lay in charismatic gifts. Afterward arose a ministry appointed and ordained by the local church. Thanks to the legalism and institutionalism of Rome there ultimately developed a hierarchy.

The remaining six lectures deal, in a more or less popular way, with the evangelical heritage and the spiritual contributions of the Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, Quaker, and Methodist churches to our common Christianity. The discussion of Anglicanism, with emphasis placed upon the essential unity of the Church of England with the reformed churches in matters of doctrine, and of Presbyterianism with reference to recent modifications of extreme Calvinism, and of Puritanism in worship, are far from satisfactory.